

Mat & MacKinnon

Until 27th August

Pleasance Below, 60 The Pleasance, Edinburgh, Venue 33, 6.45pm

£9.00 to £10.00, £8.50 to £9.00 concs.

Tel:0131 556 6650

4 stars

Probably the best comedy double act around at blowing into the microphone and making explosion noises. Mat and Mackinnon breathe new life into that old chestnut, the Comedy Sketch, with their impeccable structure and timing. Seldom settling for the predictable or easy laugh, they can even make mime funny and score top marks for eyebrow action.

There's a natural flow to their act and an inspired use of audience participation. Their tangents, freeze frames, and imaginative use of props and sound effects singles them out from standard double act fayre and thankfully there's none of the stereotypical tall guy, short guy trade off material. Instead, they weave a seamless narrative around their own relationship and the voices in their heads. This is an act which has obviously been honed to perfection yet never seems overly scripted as is evidenced by their quick-witted reaction to unexpected events which they incorporate into the show.

M + M (ooh, catchy) have already secured TV work, having just finished filming for a BBC1 programme called "Outlaws" as well as being offered a series by BBC Entertainment. And they can sing!

Amongst the highlights of their show are the repeating sketch, their account of how they met and a Phil Collins medley. Tying a noose round an audience member's neck is also no mean feat. Although their reliance on that old double act subtext of simmering homo-eroticism can be a bit wearing, they are definitely ones to watch.

Tommy Mackay